

## Social Media Marketing

Bobby Grangier, Director of Expansion, Alpha Tau Omega  
A. Jordan Fischette, Senior Leadership Consultant, Alpha Tau Omega

In the current world, using social media for marketing and promotional purposes is no longer an innovative tactic. However, to be effective with social media, you have to be innovative. Something that is “new and cool” one day (draw something) can be replaced the next day with something else (logos quiz). How do you keep your brand fresh? How do you stand out among the others? At ATO, we try to stay on top of the social media trend as much as possible.

In 2010 for our fall expansions, we wanted to try something new. ATO established a new partnership with Phired Up Productions and began working with Woody Woodcock, Director of Organizational Growth for Phired Up Productions, in the summer to develop some new ideas for marketing on campuses. In the past, we always believed that more posters meant more visibility. However, we were noticing that most undergraduate students, when asked about them, had no idea they were even up. Safe to say, they were more focused on checking Facebook, Twitter, or text messages on their smart phones. Wait, Facebook, Twitter... “EUREKA!!!” We had our chance to see if it was going to work. We had already decided that posters were less and less effective and we were producing a massive amount at a decent cost with little return. How much does hitting send on a Tweet or Status Update cost? Exactly. In the past quantifying and qualifying the impact our marketing has on undergraduates has proven to be very difficult if not nearly impossible. By moving the vast majority of efforts to digital mediums, it is much easier for us to analyze a plethora of data. Now with the click of a button we can see how many people have scanned our QR codes, how many people have visited our websites, who is retweeting us, who is following us on Twitter, who likes us on Facebook, how far is our digital reach is, etc.

Studies show that millennial undergraduates want to feel engaged and challenged. They also want to feel special (both as an individual and communally in a team environment) (Williams, 2011; Mr. Youth/Intrepid, 2012). We have learned through much trial and error, what we believe to be the two most important components of effective recruitment marketing. In order to make undergraduates feel engaged we have diversified our marketing to make it more interactive. By putting QR codes on our posters (Credit Ron Ransom, Director of Expansion at Phi Kappa Psi) they need to use their smart phone to learn more about us. By completely redeveloping JoinATO.org our nationally maintained recruitment website, we are hoping to offer new innovative designs and a more appealing experience.

The second most important thing we have learned is the power of peer to peer communication. This is where our initiative with social media marketing took hold. We can tell a prospective member 1,000 times that being a Founding Father is the greatest experience he may ever have but it does not really bear weight with them until he hears it from his friends and fellow collegians. By uploading videos of our men talking about why they chose to join, other men can see the excitement in their faces and they can hear the passion in their voices. By retweeting what their thoughts are, it is like hearing it straight from their mouth. Our recently created “I Joined Because” campaign has enabled current Founding Fathers to share with the world why they chose ATO. They are hearing straight from the men they will soon call their brothers. It is a great way for them to get a firsthand look at the organization they are joining which enables them to make the most informed decision they can.

Social media isn't just a fad anymore. We believe that it is a tool that should be used to the benefit of the organization. The statistics on Facebook are mind boggling. In March 2012, there were over 901 million monthly active users with almost half of those being active 6 of 7 days a week (Facebook, 2012). Twitter has nearly 500 million registered accounts with over 100 million in the United States with nearly 1 million worldwide being added daily. I might add it has only been around for about 6 years (Media Bistro, 2012). If done well social media keeps your brand fresh and helps you stand out among others.

### Resources

Facebook. (2012, March). *Facebook Corporate Site*. Retrieved June 18, 2012, from Facebook.com:

<https://newsroom.fb.com/content/default.aspx?NewsAreaId=22>

Media Bistro. (2012, February 12). *Just How Big is Twitter in 2012?* Retrieved June 18, 2012, from Media

Bistro: [http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/twitter-statistics-2012\\_b18914](http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/twitter-statistics-2012_b18914)

Mr. Youth/Intrepid. (2012). Millennial Inc. What your company will look like when Millennials call the shots. New York, NY, USA.

Williams, B. T. (2011). Coping with Millennials on Campus. *BizEd*, 4.